

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 16, and 20 are pending in the present application. Claims 2, 4, 7, 11, 13, 16, and 20 are the independent claims.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8-10, 12, 14, 17-19, 21-47 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2, 4, 7, 11, 13, 16 and 20 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

At page 35, item 7, the Office Action objected to claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 10-17 and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but acknowledged that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 2, 4, 7, 11, 13, 16, and 20 have been rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 2, 4, 7, 11, 13, 16, and 20 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are in condition for allowance.

Claim 6 depends directly from allowable claim 2. Claim 15 depends directly from allowable claim 11. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 6 and 15 patentably distinguish over the prior art for at least the same reasons as the claims from which they depend and are, therefore, also in condition for allowance.

At page 2, the Office Action acknowledges receipt of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d). However, the Office Action Summary (PTOL-326) fails to acknowledge a claim for foreign priority. Applicants' claim for foreign priority and submission of a certified copy of the foreign priority document were filed on June 7, 2001. Applicants respectfully request that the next Office Action acknowledge on From PTOL-326 Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d).

At page 2, numbered item 3, the Office Action objected to claim 26 for lack of antecedent basis. As claim 26, has been cancelled, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection is moot.

At page 3, numbered item 4, the Office Action rejected claims 1, 5, 9, 18-19, 21-25, 28-29, and 32-47 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,526,335 to Treyz et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,563,769 to Van Der Meulen. As claims 1, 5, 9, 18-19, 21-25, 28-29 and 32-47 have been cancelled, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is moot.

At page 27, numbered item 5, the Office Action rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Treyz et al. in view of Van Der Meulen, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,362,730 to Razavi et al. As claim 3 has been cancelled, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is moot.

The Office Action on page 30, item 6, rejected claims 8, 26, 27 and 30-31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Treyz, in view of Van Der Meulen, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,661,811 to Huemann et al. As claims 8, 26, 27 and 30-31 have been cancelled, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is moot.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

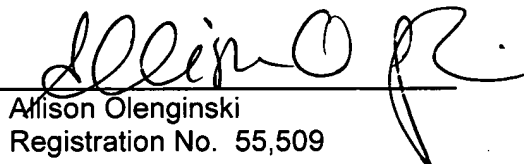
Respectfully submitted,

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Date:

26 June 2006

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